

Cascades Diversion Dam Removal Project
Environmental Assessment

Yosemite National Park

Lead Agency: National Park Service

ABSTRACT

This Cascades Diversion Dam Removal Project Environmental Assessment is intended to guide the removal of Cascades Diversion Dam. The project and its environmental assessment, which evaluates the potential impacts of the project, are integrated in this document and are referred to collectively as the Cascades Diversion Dam Removal Project Environmental Assessment. The Cascades Diversion Dam Removal Project Environmental Assessment identifies and analyzes three alternatives: Alternative 1 – the No Action Alternative; Alternative 2 – Complete Dam Removal (the “preferred alternative”); and Alternative 3 – Partial Dam Removal.

Alternative 1, the No Action Alternative, represents conditions and management practices as they currently exist at Cascades Diversion Dam. It provides the basis for comparison of each action alternative. The action alternatives (Alternatives 2 and 3) are based on the Purpose Of and Need For the Project and conform with the goals of Yosemite National Park’s *General Management Plan* and goals and management elements of the *Merced Wild and Scenic River Comprehensive Management Plan* and the *Yosemite Valley Plan*. The alternatives vary in the ways they accomplish these goals.

Alternative 2 includes the complete removal of the diversion dam and attendant structures, bank stabilization, and site restoration. This alternative would remove all structural features exposed to public view, including the river-left and river-right dam abutments, the intake structure, and the screenhouse. Alternative 3 would partially remove the diversion dam and attendant structures and would include bank stabilization and site restoration. Under Alternative 3, the river-right dam abutment and the intake structure would be retained as a river-viewing platform. All other structures would be removed.

Written comments regarding this document should be directed to:

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Written comments will also be accepted at the National Park Service planning open house held on February 26, 2003 (2:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.) at the Yosemite Valley Visitor Center East Auditorium. Planning teams will be on hand to answer questions and provide more information regarding the Cascades Diversion Dam Removal Project, as well as several other Yosemite National Park planning efforts.

This document can be reviewed online at www.nps.gov/yose/planning. To request a printed copy, refer to the information directly above or phone 209/379-1365.